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KINGDOM of HOME
and
OTHER POEMS

Lyons LeRoy



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The
Kingdom of Home
and
Other Poems

By
Lyon LeRoy



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PREFACE

I will liken the pilgrim who should happen to peruse these common-place rimes to a friend to whom a political opponent gave a campaign cigar.

He strolled around the block, smoking meanwhile; again his opponent met him and throwing up his hands with a gasp exclaimed:

“What! Still alive?”

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The Kingdom of Home.

Weary of wandering all the world over,

The wayfarer sighed for a haven of rest;

Some realm on the earth he longed to discover

Where mortals with peace and contentment
are blessed.

Then a voice he heard saying in accents alluring:

Love is a monarch whose sceptre is truth,

Whose Kingdom is Home, whose reign is enduring,

And his subjects enjoy perpetual youth.

No storm clouds may lower, no wild tempests roar,

But the spirit of peace—with hovering wing—

Broods with delight o'er the beautiful shore,

In the Kingdom of Home where Love is the King.

Around their bright altars his angels are singing
The song of the ages that never is old,
While the bells of their temples are joyfully ringing
A rapturous welcome to their happy fold—
Rest here, ye wanderer, roam again never,
Rest in the arms that the King opens wide,
Lulled by his sweet refrain—ever and ever—
Man bears no blemish that love will not hide.
Here, in the fullness of anticipation,
Care hath no power nor sorrow a sting,
Where all earthly pangs find sweet consolation
In the Kingdom of Home where Love is the
King.

'Tis a dear talisman that ever shall bind thee

Where sweet wife and children in purity dwell,
No fancy can paint the joys that shall find thee

Beneath the weird power of its magical spell;
Oh! Life, happy life where love is forever

Enshrined in the hearts of the good and the
true,

Time cannot corrode nor circumstance sever

The golden like chain that binds me to you;
Thy trust shall not fail, no longer bewail thee,

While the King and his angels in melody sing
Always to rest the woes that assail thee,

In the Kingdom of Home where Love is the
King.

Love and Its Wages.

Across an arid, barren, broad domain,
I saw one thirsty drag his dubious way,
Suffering had stamped the impress of her sway
Upon his brow in wrinkled lines of pain.
Around, beyond, with earnest wistful strain
His eyes were cast for water to allay
The fiend within, clamoring for its prey.
He staggered to a bank of shaded sands,
And there a few drops, trickling slow he found,
The which he gathered in his scooped hands,
So thought to drink, when a distressful sound
Smote on his ear and stayed his own demands;
He looked and saw a fellow-pilgrim, bound,
Famished and fainting, stretched upon the
ground;
Himself forgot, the traveler ran
And gave it to the the dying man,
Then turned to gather, yet again,
The few scant drops that might remain;
When lo! a spring had burst its bands
And bubbled o'er the burning sands;
For him the cooling waters pour
A living stream forever more.

On Our Judgement of Other Men.

Who shall judge a man of manners,
Rate him by his speech and dress;
Princes, heralded with banners,
Oft are fit for something less.
Cotton coat, with labor rusted,
Often clothes the golden ore;
Satin robes, with jewels crusted,
Certainly can do no more.

God, who counts by souls, for payment,
Asks but love from you and me,
While He values velvet raiment
But as pebbles on the lea.

There's the bubble-jeweled fountain,
 There's the weed-embroidered rill,
There's the shining snow-crowned mountain
 And the autumn-painted hill.
Princes' gardens bloom with roses,
 Daisies fleck the trackless plain,
While impartial love disposes
 Unto both his sun and rain.

God, who counts by souls, not graces,
 Souls, whatever their degree,
Reckons honors, titles, places,
 But as pebbles on the lea.

Men are one in thought and feeling,
One by heritage and blood,
All by equal right appealing
To the Fatherhood of God.
There's a love sure and all-heeding,
All-capacious, wise, and fit,
Inward for the smallest needing,
Outward to the infinite;

So, He counts by souls, not manners,
Loves and cares for you and me,
Counts the princes' shining banners
But as pebbles on the lea.

The Christian.

Oh! Thou, my Father, when Thy summons bid
Me come to Thee, may I, obedient
As a trusting child, give mine into Thy hand,
And thus be led into a better land.

Thus paused a pilgrim once to pray,
Unmindful of his fellow's scorn,
His path beset with clod and thorn;
Then steadily pursued his way.

Among his kind's distressful needs,
He sought to make his presence blest,
To suffering souls a welcome guest,
With gentle words and kindly deeds.

He glanced into a crowded street,
Where, even as he passed along,
He saw one fall beneath the throng,
Trampled and bruised by cruel feet,

He held that careless crowd at bay,
He bore the bruised to safer ground,
A healing balm poured on his wound,
Then sent him strengthened on his way.

And one poor human soul he found,
Where loathsome vapors thickly curled,
Forgotten by a thoughtless world,
In suffering helpless darkness bound.

He softly smoothed that dying bed,
He gently purged the poisoned air;
He told her of a dwelling where
No tears of wretchedness are shed.

He bade her kiss a chastening rod,
While yet remained a single breath;
She heard, and wept, and smiled as death
Despatched her trusting soul to God.

Sometimes another's load he bore,
And oft another's shivering form
Was sheltered from the pelting storm
With robes the kindly pilgrim wore.

Thus he essayed in love and grief,
To ease the pangs of mortal woe,
While summer sun departing slow
Gave place to autumn's falling leaf.

Then winter with a quiet hand
Sprinkled her frost upon his head;
And then his Father gently led
The pilgrim to a "better land."

The Star That Shines For Me.

Among the shining isles of light,
That gem the ocean of the sky,
There's one more beautiful and bright
Than those that all around it lie.

Chorus—

O! Star divine, eternal light,
Thou Heaven's brightest diadem,
Forever, and forever bright,
Thou blessed Star of Bethlehem.

With perfect beams that never wane
Where'er thy dwelling place may be
On moiling earth or troubled main
There is the Star that shines for me.

(Chorus)

I count not weariness nor care.

My rest and peace are all in thee,
My blessed guide, so bright and fair
The Star that shines, that shines for me.

(Chorus)

Through stormy clouds and calm repose,
Thy constant beams doth clearly shine,
While purer on my vision grows
Thy glory, that is all divine.

(Chorus)

Whate'er betide I'll not despair
Nor doubt thy sweet fidelity,
But evermore while life may wear
I'll trust the Star that shines for me.

(Chorus)

The Cynic.

This life is but a tug to live,
A breathless gasp for breath;
A restless rushing after rest,
A deathless dread of death.

A greedy grasp for golden gain,
A stint and starve to save,
A toilsome struggle after fame,
A triumph, and—a grave.

There sits the pampered heir of pride,
While lands and bonds increase;
His days are days of luxury,
His nights are nights of ease.

Here labor plods its weary task
To still the cry of want,
While ever grinning at its side
Stands famine grim and gaunt.

Yes, "God is good," but thinly clad
Goes virtue all the same,
While vice arrayed in purple robes,
Revels in gilded shame.

Or, "truth is great and must prevail,"
(In course of providence)
But fettered in the common jail
Lies friendless innocence.

And Justice, 'tis a hollow cheat,
A pettifogger's thrall;
In either triumph or defeat,
'Tis Justice grabs your all.

Of honor, what a dreadful dearth,
Few souls it can but leaven;
There is no honest soul on earth,
And scarcely—none in Heaven.

Of lust, of crime, of want and greed
Earth is the common womb;
Of virtue, love, of kindly deed
Earth is the common tomb.

Three Bells.

'Tis often I hear while twilight is falling,
The clang of the bell in the old school-house
tower,
Clear toned from the frost, its deep voice is
calling
Away from our sport to the school master's hour.
Clang, clang, clang, sturdily clanging,
While my heart swells to its happy refrain,
Through the mantle that years around me is
hanging
I am living the days of my boyhood again.

Once more o'er my heart a vision is stealing,
A vision of beauty who stands by my side,
While bells overhead are merrily pealing
A promise of joy to my beautiful bride.
Ring, ring, ring, gleefully ringing:
Oh! fair is the day but fairer is she,
Bring garlands of roses and orange-blooms,
singing
Good luck and long life to my bride and me.

Be still! 'tis the moan of the heart-bleeding
 mourner,
 Whose sorrow is echoed back from the night's
 gloom,
Repeating the tale, "here but a sojourner"
 Man ever must yield to humanity's doom.
 Toll, toll, toll, solemnly knelling:
Childhood and marriage are scarcely a breath,
 With childhood and marriage is constantly
 dwelling
All ghastly and fearful omnipotent death.

Our Book-keepers Reflections.

My son you must pay for your sinning,
 However long your account may be run,
It is well you should know ere beginning,
 Just how you must pay for your fun.
Though you are an expert and scholar,
 No system that you can invent
Can swindle him out of a dollar,
 He collects to the uttermost cent.
He is pitiless in his exactions
 And calls like a thief in the night;
No grace days are in his transactions,
 His drafts must be paid upon sight.

As he knows what mold you are made in
So he chooses his settlement day,
When out of the stock that you trade in,
There will be the devil to pay.
Don't think it is easy to blind him,
Or sometime, when he's not around,
You can sneak on the ledger behind him
An item that cannot be found;
No matter how sly the proceeding
That item he also will post,
Then grins with delight at the reading
And laughs at your satisfied boast.

In measure or weight, if you lack it,
Your value he is sure to engross,
For he's steadily on to your racket
As his profit is always your loss.
He cares not for written debentures,
He holds by implacable law;
Be cautious, then, in your adventures,
Lest you feel the stern grip of his paw.
Oh! he is the clerk of all ages,
So alert that he'll force you to say—
While trying to balance your pages;
"Ah! there is the devil to pay."

You may think of endowing a college
With profits you never may need;
Well, do so, my son, with the knowledge
That Satan won't credit your deed.
No, charities can't make you level,
No matter how large, the amount
Won't balance your deal with the devil,
For he carries no credit account;
And however loud your profession,
Or long the prayers you have made,
Remember that every transgression
Is a debt that will have to be paid.

So resolve as you may on relenting
Your vices and follies when gray,
Though an ocean you weep in repenting,
There will be the devil to pay.
Then at last, when you are a debtor
On his book for each gratified whim—
Each whim but a link in the fetter
That bound you still closer to him—
For all of the preaching since Moses
Not a jot of his claim will he stay;
At the door when the clearing house closes,
There will be the devil to pay.

Sleep.

Dearest mother, come, and bring
Solace to life's carping cares,
Hide me from its crafts and snares,
All its pain and suffering.
Lead me with thy fairy hand
Far into the shadow land,
Where enchanted fountains play,
Far beyond dim star-eyed night
Leagues away from moiling day,
I would have no other light
Save the flash of fancy's ray.

So I wander careless, free,
Over strangely flowered plains,
Down through verdure bordered lanes,
Charmed by sweet-toned minstrelsy.
Golden palaces arise
On my fascinated eyes
Melt to mist and float away.
Phantom forms flit to and fro,
Valleys rise and mountains fall,
Cities come and forests go,
Shadows unto shadows call.

Age is youth, and so from age,
Sleep turns backward many a page;
See! above, a mountain peak
Lifts its dim and hoary head,
While from every rock and glen
Soundless guns their volleys speak;
From their graves the shattered dead
Form heroic lines again;
Down sinks the peak, Oh! it is
Yawning wide a deep abyss,

And I, standing on its brink
Fearless neither pause nor shrink,
But with voiceless cry I leap
Down a hillside washed and steep,
Up into an apple tree,
On its gnarled and fruitful limbs
I would sit and pluck,—but see,
Downward through the shallow lake
How the little shiner swims
Flashing by, as I would take
Him into my eager hand.

Ah! his shining scales are prints
In my dear old picture book,
While the lake a rippling brook
O'er a pebbled bottom glints;
There I sit and deftly make
Foot caves in the humid sand,
While enchanted fountains play
Still beyond the star-eyed night,
Leagues away from moiling day
Where there is no other light
Save the flash of fancy's ray.

Youth is age; so sleep unrolls
Still for me the unrevealed
Gleams on hieroglyphic scrolls,
While I read them all unsealed,
Aspirations vague are piling
Into noble granite towers,
Fame, in trailing robes, all smiling
Wreathes her laurel round my head
Leads me to a banquet spread,

Deep within immortal bowers,
 'Tis no spirit's whispered call,
'Tis no phantom's occult thrall
 Bids me turn; I look, and lo!
There she stands—in radiant guise—
 Clothed in everlasting youth,
In her dear unfathomed eyes
 Truth and love impassioned glow;
Heart to heart as long ago
 We were one in plighted truth.

So we down the forest aisle
 Watch the shapeless shadows stalk
Side by side with cedars walk,
 While the bushes frisk and talk
And the flowers nod and smile;
 Hark, we hear from unseen birds,
Carols born of Paradise,
 Melodies and loving sighs,
Greetings in unspoken words.

Take me then, Oh! mother mine,
Touch me with caressing power,
Often doth one touch of thine
Heal the sorrows of an hour;
Chiefest friend of mortals, thou
Most delightful mystery,
Thou—who givest bliss to me,
Take me from the sordid now,
Where enchanted fountains play
Far beyond the star-eyed night
Leave to me no other light
Save the flash of fancy's ray.

The Wakenda.

Streams may be longer and of fairer flow,
Wider and deeper and of clearer head;
But none there are where visions dimly grow
Such as the twilight calls up from thy bed.
Thy channel once a mighty river led
Down to an ancient sea, with current slow,
While from thy placid bosom horrid forms
Lifted their scaly heads, or hid from storms
Beneath thy waves. Yon sycamore doth fling
His white arms to the night—a ghostly king,
King of a long forgotten race,
Who fought and sowed, who reaped, who
built and dwelt
Along thy banks; and on whose toil with grace
The fair earth smiled. A race of men who felt
As we—life's passions and its pangs; whose
dream
As ours, was that of empire and of power,
Whose seat should be beside this stream;
But have passed, as we shall pass, the hour
In dust, where Time's unsparing hand hath led
All empires to the house of nations dead.

Sampson and Delilah.

Man is a mighty, mighty force
On this round world of ours,
Who can predict his future course,
Or who compute his powers?
Vast forces move at his command,
Darkness before him flees,
He takes the lightning in his hand
And talks across the seas.

Fortells the weather—foul or fair,
Marks course of winds and snows,
Takes elements of earth and air,
Their composition shows.
He laughs at the grim mountain's height,
Or rivers deep and wide;
To bore through one is his delight
Or span the other's tide.

He leaps a continent in play
With thews of burnished steel,
Up through the clouds he cleaves his way
There guides his even keel.
At one great bound far into space—
Which has for him no bar—
He springs, and reads a planet's face
And fain would grasp a star.

And then, poor weakling that he is—
Sad to relate of him—
He cowers and whimpers, think of this!
At some weak woman's whim.
Around her dainty hand she winds
This prince of powers' pride,
With but a gossamer she binds
This giant to her side.

She bids, and he straightway obeys,
To churn or baby rock;
Comes trembling home whene'er he stays
Out after ten o'clock;
Abjectly at her feet will bow,
Nerveless beneath her ban,
And tell the blackest lie, that how
He had to see a man.

All that he has or is he'll plight
With most transparent guile,
Then call himself a lucky wight
Can he but win a smile.
Let her but give one tender fling
Out of her loving eye,
Then he'll do every foolish thing
Except crawl off and die.

Two Doctors.

Two doctors once in our town,
Both bent on riches and renown,
Hung out to view two glaring signs
Whereon were traced some gilded lines,
Suggestive of the mystic art
Of healing every human smart.
Soon after, from each office door
These doctors, each began to pour
A flood of scientific tracts,
Of circulars and almanacs,
Which told the country all around
That each a remedy had found
For every mortal ache or pain,
Or cut or sore, or bruise or sprain;
For ills within and ills without,
From moody brain to wincing gout;
From—well, to make the matter short,
A medicine for every sort
Of ills that men and beasts endure,
Not only safe, but very sure.

The one it was a liniment,
Concocting which the doctor spent
Each day a fortune vast; indeed
It took at least a week to read
About his grand palatial store;
About his ships that daily bore
The precious herbs from foreign shore;
About the millions he employed,
And millions more who had enjoyed
The privilege of being cured,
Of all the aches they had endured,
By just one bottle, which expense
Was but a paltry fifty cents.
The other was a famous salve
Which had, as such most always have,
A dreadful highfalutin' name—
You never could pronounce the same,
It was as though it made a grab
At every dead and living gab.
This also was a very sure,
In fact the most unfailing cure

That ever Æsculapian plan
Had vouchsafed unto ailing man.

Not only wealth, but art and brains,
With persevering toil of years,
With patience, prayers and even tears

Rewards at last his earnest pains;
And from his cogitations wrought
This height of scientific thought,
This famous salve to drive all trace
Of sickness from the human race.

Straightway, between these two arose
The rivalry of common foes;

Each said the other was a cheat
Who made his money by deceit;
A humbug and a charlatan,
And anything except a man.

At length to such a high degree
Did reach this bitter rivalry,
Two doctors did for once agree
To advertize a certain day,

On which each would his skill display;
When each would do his very best
Before an audience to test,
And let the public judge and see
Who had the better remedy.

The day it came, and with it came
A multitude of every name;
Then before the assembled crowd,
Amid hurrahs and plaudits loud,
One doctor walked upon the stand
With something borne in either hand.
The audience saw, midst all the roar,
A full grown dog he gently bore,
While in the other hand was seen
A brand new ax, all bright and keen.
The doctor said: "When science makes
"Experiments, she mostly takes
"The reptile which you call a frog.
"But I, approaching nearer man,
"Have studied out a better plan,
"So here, you see, I have a dog,

"And operating thus, you see

"A common feat of surgery."

Whack! went the ax; off dropped the tail

While the dog mourned a fearful wail.

Then as the crowd was all intent

The doc' applied some liniment,

And ere the dog had ceased to wail

In fact there grew another tail.

That congregation yelled and yelled.

The doctor's bosom heaved and swelled.

For this had been his lifelong aim,

The pinnacle of earthly fame;

He could not say what he desired

So made a bow and then retired.

The other doctor took the floor

And said: "My friends, you shouldn't roar

"Nor make all this unseemly noise;

"'Tis fit for not grown men, but boys,

"And please for once do not applaud

"What seems to me so plain a fraud;

"Now save your lungs and plaudits, too,
"Until you see what I can do."

Then on the stand he deftly placed
The tail that had but lately graced
The dog which now had just begun
With joy to wag another one.

"Now," said the doc', "don't think this tag
"Was never more destined to wag,
"For on this piece of flesh and bone
"The power of science shall be shown.

"Right here the proof you all shall have
"How wonderful is this, my salve."

Then holding up the tail to view
A little lump of salve applied
And rubbed it in, and more beside,
And while he rubbed there surely grew—
As wildly grew that crowd's surprise,
As wider grew their mouths and eyes,
Till mouths and eyes all set agog,
I'll swear—there grew another dog.

Washington's Monument.

Along the hoary centuries march
As Kingdoms rose and Empires fell
Gray monolith and sculptured arch
Their famous tales of granduer tell.

When dismal superstition led
The world with wand and magic rod,
And sacrificial altars bled
With victims to a ruthless god;
When thought was haled to stake and lock,
While freedom was a rayless star;
When faith was but a ghastly mock,
And peace the sated sleep of war.
When selfishness was law of right—
And reason but the serf of sense,
While science wandered through the night
That darkened man's intelligence;
When labor was the drudge of power
That gave no respite in its years,
But counted every weary hour
In drops of mingled blood and tears.

So, misrule had no antidote,
And men, with fear in all their lore,
Submissive kissed the hand that smote
And meekly blessed the chains they wore.

Oh! not with iron nor with stone
Are laid the buttresses of fame,
From mortal hand is not upgrown
The arch that glorifies a name;
I see a nobler monument,
Deep buttressed in the souls of men,
Its space spans a broad continent,
Its apex lifts o'er mortal ken.

Where unaffrighted conscience stirs—
 Beneath her tall cathedral spires—
The fervent souls of worshippers
 Around unfettered altar fires;
Where lineage is shorn of might,
 Nor rank, nor caste, nor titled clan,
But over all are peace and right
 To grace the brotherhood of man.
Where genius is not forced to hide,
 Nor fears the priestly bigots' frown,
For every upward way is wide,
 And honors perseverance crown.

In house, in factory and field,
Along swift traffic's busy course
The fairies of invention wield
The marvels of their magic force,
Where he who uses type and stick
To voice a dauntless freeman's word,
Or marks the harnessed lightning's click
Are mightier than the monarch's sword.
And man, the master of his toil,
Sole lord of all his labors bring
From forest, mine and teeming soil,
Is soldier, citizen and king.

The best, the mightiest and the last,
As kingdoms waste and empires fall,
Above the ruins of the past
It stands and overtops them all.
While freedom with unchecked career
Shall lead the waiting centuries on,
A world renewed shall rise and cheer
The deathless name of Washington.

To Sybil.

That man has surely lived in vain
Who has not felt a lover's pain,
Nor breathed a lover's wistful sigh;
And blank will be his life, indeed
If he has never learned to heed—
Nor felt his bare existence need
The love-glance of a woman's eye.

Should earth become a sunless world,
And moon be from its orbit hurled
And all the stars should wane and die;
There still would shine divinely bright—
A purer, more enduring light,
To cheer me through the long, long night—
A love-glance from my Sybil's eye.

Could rivers run a million years,
And fill the oceans full of tears,
That hitherto had all been dry;
Then each drop valued at its birth
With all the treasures on this earth,
Methinks no single drop were worth
A tear drop from my Sybil's eye.

Sybil Kissed Me.

Last night, to my heart's surprise

Sybil kissed me;

Love or Judas in her eyes,

Still she kissed me.

Time, you steal away my youth,

All my trust in woman's truth,

Yet, you thief, you cannot rob

Me of that one sweet heart throb,

Sybil kissed me.

Hope undone and passion fled,
Sybil kissed me,
Faith and constancy long dead,
Sybil kissed me.

Ah! me, what a world of bliss
Circles round a woman's kiss,
Could I build anew on this,
Sybil kissed me.

Heart of mine could not regret
Sybil kissed me,
Could not if it would forget
Sybil kissed me;
All along life's troubled stream,
As the memory of a dream,
Still will flash this radiant gleam,
Sybil kissed me.

Tomorrow.

To-morrow, to-morrow,
Forever remain
The balm for our sorrow,
Our surcease of pain.

No woes dost thou bear,
No grief laden tears,
No burden of care,
No want and no fears.

No heart broken sigh
Is born on thy wing,
No clouds in thy sky,
No storms dost thou bring.

Thou laborer's ease,
Thou sluggard's intent,
Thou captive's release,
Thou miser's content.

Thou fool's Paradise,
Thou summit of fame,
Thou ambition's prize,
And grave of all shame.

The coquette's last flame,
The fakir's last sham,
The gambler's last game,
The drunkard's last dram.

To the beggar, 'tis clothes,
To the gold seeker, wealth,
To the weary, repose,
And the invalid health.

Thou triumph of truth
And downfall of wrong;
Thou day of all youth,
Thou day of all song.

Mysterious day,
Humanity's boon,
Still flee thou away,
Still beckon us on.

Yet, stay thou, tomorrow,
Forever remain,
A balm for our sorrow,
Our surcease of pain.

A Piece of Advice.

My daughter, let your speech be plain,
And least of all unstrung
With those false coins called slang, that stain
Our good old Saxon tongue.

For slang does not your lips adorn,
Though oft it may amuse;
Though terse and cute, 'tis always born
As reptiles in the sloughs.

As water, clear or muddy, flows
From fountain like its kind,
So language, dear, distinctly shows
The index of your mind.

A quiet speech, low-voiced and clean,
Will give you added grace;
'Tis more than beauty's transient sheen,
Or faultless form and face.

Don't imitate, with tongue or pen,
The one who handles slime,
And thinks to cleanse his fellowmen
By pelting them with grime;

Could pulpit grossness antidote
The crafty serpent's fang,
A bishopric we ought to vote
The gospeller of slang.

But seemly speech and courteous mode
Will win a larger tide
Of travel over any road,
Or it be straight or wide.

Yes, daughter, I can quite forgive
Your pinching shoes and stays,
Even the shallow life you live
In Madam Grundy's ways;

I can forgive your giddy airs,
Your simpering, inane smile,
And all your coquetries and snares
That make a woman's wile,

Your wide hat, furbelow and frill,
Your flounces and your bang;
But hang me if I ever will
Forgive your use of slang.

George Sand.

From the rare mount of genius she surveyed
The follies and the vices of her kind,
And with the keen lance of a master mind
She pierced them through and throuh, and well
arrayed
The subtle forces of her trenchant power,
Against that tyranny which sought to bind
In hateful thraldom the hearts best dower.
The lyre of constant love she sweetly played,
Then made of love the plaything of an hour.
With vice she toyed as a familiar friend,
While limning virtue as the greatest good,
Priestess and victim! whom to comprehend
Were better crowned in silence, as she stood
In pride of mind and shame of womanhood.

An Aspiration.

High above and all boundless before me,
Rolls the universe throbbing with life,
And how fiercely the longing comes o'er me
To mix in its passionate strife.

For the guerdon that men have called glory,
For the meed of endurable fame
And to leave on my tomb the sweet story
Of a noble imperishable name.

Who will show me the road I must travel,
Or byways that I ought to shun,
Oh! could I this tangle unravel
None too soon were my efforts begun.

Could I loosen the toils that have bound me,
And turn all that I am to account,
Freely choose of the good all around me,
Then strive for the top of the mount.

With voice from my soul ever crying,
Like a bird that repines in its cage,
With a spirit within me defying
The powers that I long to engage.

I will break from the fetters that bind me,
Give myself to the true and divine,
Leave all that is sordid behind me
And make this great universe mine.

Day After Election.

For the word that the people hath spoken,
Is the word that patriots obey,
Whatever is builded or broken,
Or rises or falls by the way.

Still the stars on our banner are voicing
The story all time shall repeat;
Of the union of victors, rejoicing
With those who went down in defeat.

Ah! the musket may solve some equations,
Some oppressed the sword may release,
But the noblest triumph of nations
Is the ballot-box triumph of peace.

Brother Jonathan to Kansas City.

I know a maiden young but wise,
 Enthroned upon a dozen hills;
Whose realm, replete with enterprise,
 A continent with wonder fills.
More royal there is none, I ween,
 Than she whose fame has reached the skies—
My Midland Queen, my Midland Queen.

Her realm was once a desert wild,
 In ages, too, not far remote,
The savage home of the forest child,
 The lair of fox and sly coyote.
'Twas there, on hill and deep ravine
 My gracious Lady looked and smiled,
And thus became my Midland Queen.

Now here her castles grandly lift
 Their beauties high in steel and stone;
Nor famed Alladin's regal gift
 The splendor of their wealth outshone,
As from these hills and vales between
 These marvels grew supremely swift,
My Midland Queen, my Midland Queen.

And hark! from mart and thronging street
 I hear her traffic's ceaseless hum;
I see the stores of western wheat,
 Of corn and cattle quickly come;
And southern plains of cotton sheen
 Their tribute pouring at thy feet,
My Midland Queen, my Midland Queen.

Proud Empress of the fruitful West,
Though great hath been thy enterprise
Still deep within thy virgin breast
Sleep greater possibilities—
So great mankind hath never seen,
To waken at thy high behest—
My Midland Queen, my Midland Queen.

While gallant South and cultured East
Shall willing own thy destiny;
While welcome at thy royal feast
The boundless North in fealty.
There wilt thou bless in gracious mein,
These gathered hosts that come to thee,
My Midland Queen, my Midland Queen.

Let croakers carp, we need not fear;
Let envy gnash her teeth and sigh.
Their ruthless jibe and covert sneer
We will not heed; but you and I
Can wait, in confidence serene,
Till time is ripe, then we shall hear
Them yield thy claim, my Midland Queen.
And why not? All around thy feet
My fairest plains thy pleasure wait,
While culture and refinement greet
Earth's rarest gifts heaped at thy gate;
And I the nations will convene
To hear my children's tongues repeat
The glory of my Midland Queen.

The Gray Has Conquered Now.

Comrades, 'tis many years since ran

Our young blood hot and free,

Beside translucent Rapidan

And muddy Tennessee.

Long since war's whirlwind fiercely swept

O'er mountain, vale and plain,

Since, battle torn, we weary slept

'Mid dying and the slain;

Since cypress wilds and slopes of pine,
With martial camps were white,
Long since the distant foeman's line
Gleamed dimly through the night.

Old comrades, life has changed since then,
Since march, bivouac and fray
When we were strong and buoyant men,
And fought the gallant Gray.

To us the evil days have come,
With age's hoary signs,
And now Time beats a muffled drum
Along our thinning lines;

That stern, old, unrelenting seer
Writes round the soldier's brow,
In solemn letters, year by year,
"The Gray has conquered now."

The hero of the fiery blast,
Of shell and leaden sleet,
The first in deathful charge, and last
To linger in retreat.

The slender boy who gaily ran
Undaunted, to the fore,
No less than he, the brawny man,
Who brunt of battle bore;

On all of these, both file and rank,
He steals his subtle way;
Nor center deep nor solid flank
His sly approach can stay.

His silent, but his sure advance
No strategy can ward;
He scorns the picket's vigilance
And passes every guard.

He fears no rampart's shotted guns,
No sentry's watchful tread;
No lines of serried arms he shuns,
To blanch the soldier's head.

But right and left and up and down,
Around each comrade's brow,
He writes on raven locks and brown:
"The Gray has conquered now."

My Comrade.

Come, comrades, away from chancel and knave,
From statues that gleam through trimmed
cedars' shade,
From sculptures that shine and the granite
decked grave,
To the wild forest ways
Where the wind softly plays
A dirge o'er the turf where our comrade was laid.

Come away from this pomp and this vanity show,
Let us kindle our fire in that pine-shadowed
glen,
And gather around its flickering glow;
Let the volume of age
Turn backward a page,
While fancy shall make us all soldiers again.

Now hush, and I'll tell you his story to-night,—
While the stars overhead all silently shine,
Of the comrade, who girding his belt for the fight
In the glint of the morn
Now lies bloody and torn,
'Neath the spot where he fell in the front of his line.

I have echoed his laugh when gayly he fared,
 With a sympathized touch of his sorrow have
 cried,
His canteen, his knapsack and blanket have
 shared,
 Through sunshine and rain,
 And wintry campaign
I have marched at the touch of this mountain-
 boy's side.

Remember him, yes, time can never dim
 The halo that circles his common-place name,
The sword and the plume were baubles to him,
 And the epaulets bars,
 Or the eagles and stars
Were gloss, only gloss on a patriot's fame.

I recollect well when my ardor and will
 From the bubbling fount of his courage partook,
In the battery's front, on the high bastioned hill,
 Where his hero lit face
 Was a guidon to trace
Through the smoke-laden air, where the fierce
 battle shook.

By the colors we love my cavalier stood,
 'Mid the saber's keen flash and the bayonet's
 dart,
There—I saw him go down in war's awful flood,
 Then I took his last word,
 As his pallid lips stirred
With a message of love to the girl of his heart.

But the vision has passed, the morning has come,
 Our fire has gone out and the embers are cold,
We hearken no more to the reveille drum,
 For the swift flying years,
 With their joys and their tears
Bear us on to the soldier asleep in his mold.

Yet, while organs intone and choristers wail,
 While the half-masted banners in sympathy
 wave,
I would wander away to that pine-shadowed vale,
 And with earth's choicest bloom
 Would I garland his tomb,
And drop but a tear on my comrade's lone grave.

A Thanksgiving Idyl.

When summer with her genial face,
And autumn with abundant grace,
Reluctant turn from us away,
And leave the world in sombre guise
Of naked fields and dreary skies.

Then blest is he, thrice blessed then,
Who, from the sordid cares of men,
And nature's gloomy frowns can turn
To find some hidden constant source,
Whence flows content with even course,
And fires of peace continual burn.

Or he, who, while kind nature smiled,
By pleasant days was not beguiled
To sleep and dream in fragrant bowers,
But set himself with earnest heart
To gather from her gifts in part,
The means to cheer her dreary hours.

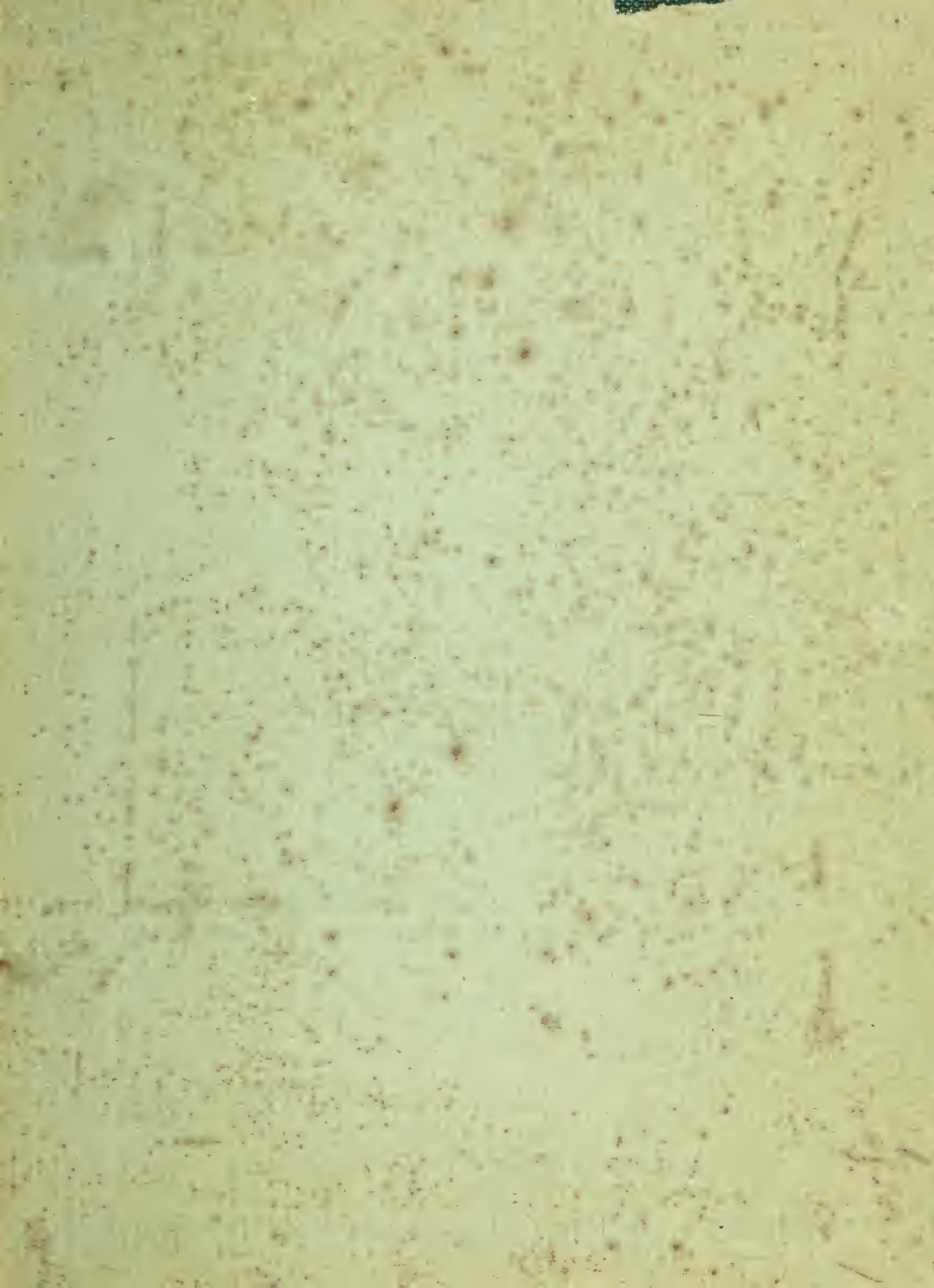
Oh! you who walk life's rougher ways,
Foot-sore and hearts weary,
To whom life's but a misty maze,
Whose skies are always dreary;
Although your sun may scarcely shine,
Your days be dark and murky,
Although you may not richly dine,
Nor eat Thanksgiving turkey,
"Take heart of grace," do not forestall
Whate'er may come tomorrow,
For He who notes the sparrow's fall
Heeds every human sorrow.
And while your life with toil is fraught
To eke a scanty living,
From constant fortitude is wrought
An earnest of Thanksgiving.

And you, who sheltered from the blast
Of bleak and drear November,
With "lines in pleasant places cast,"
Less happy lots remember.
When you your smoking boards have sought
To eat Thanksgiving dinner,
Amid your feasting give a thought
To some less favored sinner.

Remember, while you richly feed
Where thanks profuse are given,
To let one kind substantial deed
Escort your thanks to heaven.
A humane heart, a trust assured
That life is well worth living,
Earth's good well used, its ills endured
Make life one long Thanksgiving.







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